

February 13, 2007: Everett Statement Against Democrat Iraq Resolution

Floor Statement

Rep. Terry Everett (R-AL)

Surge in Iraq Resolution H.Con.Res. 63

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Mr. Speaker:

I rise in strong opposition to H.Con.Res.63, the Democrats' non-binding resolution that does nothing to improve the outcome the war, but does much to hurt the war against terrorism.

Their resolution claims they support the troops, however they refuse to protect the money our troops must have while in harm's way.

If we wanted to have a meaningful debate on the real issues facing this country, we would take up Congressman Johnson's bill that opposes any effort to "cut off or restrict" funding for our military.

But that's not the debate we are having today. Instead, we are debating a non-binding resolution that in my mind can only hurt our troops, who are on the battlefield...even as we speak.

This resolution can only give comfort to those who wish to kill Americans.

Making Iraq a secure place is difficult because of deep-seated religious and ethnic divisions. This is highlighted by the murderous acts of Saddam's dictatorship against so many.

In addition, Al Qaeda and local terrorists along with hostile foreign governments, including Iran, have both encouraged and funded the current violence in hopes that Iraq will not follow the path to democracy. They must not be allowed to succeed.

Any American life lost in the defense of our nation is one too many. Yet, we must not turn from our task of defeating

terrorism before the job is done.

President Bush is the commander in chief and intends to reinforce American troop strength by some 21,000 soldiers to help Iraq's new government finally control violence and restore order. While I believe the decision to increase troop strength in Iraq should have been made much sooner and in greater numbers, it presents the only viable option to bringing order to the country and laying the foundation for Iraqi government control of that nation's security.

Iraq's government is taking new steps to control the violence from all ethnic groups and made it clear that our abandoning them at this stage would guarantee failure for democracy in Iraq. And it would ensure a tremendous set back in America's battle to deny terrorism a foothold and given them more chances to kill Americans. Pulling back now, with no viable plan to stabilize Iraq, would be a disastrous action.

This sentiment was expressed in the most recent National Intelligence Estimate (NIE) on Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, the NIE is the Intelligence Community's (IC) most authoritative written judgments on national security issues and is designed to help us develop policies to protect US national security interests. Specifically, this report states, "Coalition capabilities, including force levels, resources, and operations, remain an essential stabilizing element in Iraq."

In addition, it goes on to say, "If Coalition forces were withdrawn rapidly during the term of this Estimate, we judge that this almost certainly would lead to a significant increase in the scale and scope of sectarian conflict in Iraq, intensify Sunni resistance to the Iraqi Government, and have adverse consequences for national reconciliation."

While America must not be in Iraq indefinitely, we should not leave without ensuring that the terrorists there are put down.

To do otherwise, would be terribly shortsighted and would ultimately embolden our terrorist enemies who have made no secret of their desire to keep killing Americans.

As a member of the House Armed Services and Intelligence committees, I have monitored the developments in the war on terrorism, including those in Iraq.

I met with President Bush in the White House to discuss the military mission in Iraq shortly after he outlined his strategy for Iraq in early January.

We explored what would happen to Iraq, the Middle East and America if we withdrew from the fight before Iraq's democratic government is strong enough to maintain the peace. Our conclusion was that Iraq would become a sanctuary for terrorists and a base from which they could launch future attacks against Americans.

Some members have tried to claim that the war in Iraq has nothing to do with the war on terrorism. That's the only way they can justify this non-binding resolution and that's pure nonsense.

We have the greatest military on the face on the earth. One that no other military dare stand before less they be destroyed.

The only thing that can defeat us is the lack of will. And may God help us if we lose the will to defend this great nation against terrorism.